

Lulu and Maurice —stars who are happiest at home

AS THE lone Bee Gee Robin sets out on the rocky road to solo fame or oblivion, now completely estranged from his two brothers—his family even—he can seek consolation in these four words.

"I still love him."

They come not from wife Molly, but from twin Maurice, now celebrating his fourth month of wedded bliss with Mrs. Lulu Gibb, and rapidly becoming eligible for the title of happiest man in the country.

To see Maurice and Lulu together is complete joy in itself. If you ever had any doubts about that wedding you only have to see them, and if you know what it's like to be in love, you'll know they are!

I spent nearly three hours last week sharing their happiness, admiring the roses in their cheeks, delighting in the care with which they look after their temporary Kinnerton Street house, and getting very tearful at the umpteenth reshooting of Maurice's treasured video-tape film of the Gerrards Cross wedding.

Why did they get married?

"Because we were in love," they say immediately.

"After all, it wasn't a rush job," adds Lu. "We'd known each other for two years before we got married."

Their courtship began quietly and secretly, and it was not really until Lulu went to America last

by DAVID HUGHES

year and went out with Davy Jones that the whole thing came out into the open.

"Maurice got very jealous of Davy, and broke the whole thing off. I didn't want that and was very upset. Then I tried to get all cool and wanted to persuade him that there was no need for this childishness, and couldn't we just be good friends, with no strings attached?"

"To begin with he said 'no,' and told me to stop bothering him. Anyway, who was I kidding? I

didn't want us just to be good friends.

"But I got him back! I persuaded Joanne and Colin Petersen to take me to the studio where Maurice was recording... and



Mr. and Mrs. Gibb at home: 'If the first year of marriage is the worst, we can't wait till next year!'

we only had to look each other in the eyes to know we were in love."

Lulu is a bubbling personality at the worst of times, but get her on the subject of Maurice, love and marriage and there's no stopping her.

Lu remembers precisely the first time they met—in the "Top Of The Pops" canteen when the Bee Gees were singing "New York Mining Disaster" and she "The Boat That I Row."

"I thought they were all rather flash then," says Lu.

"And I thought, what do I say to this big pop star?" says Maurice.

She also remembers the universal problem of trying to meet him again without making it appear obvious.

"I knew Robert (Stigwood), and he offered to take me to see the Pink Floyd at the Saville Theatre, because he said Maurice would be there too. He was... with another girl! So I tried to be all tactful and asked him the name of his girlfriend. 'She's not my girlfriend and her name's...' he replied, so I breathed again!"

Mr. and Mrs. Gibb are both real home-loving people—a strange phenomenon in the glittering world of pop, where at the flick of a finger you could have everything done for you.

"Much of our time together before we were married we used to spend buying things for Maurice's flat," says Lu. "And I always kissed him goodnight on the doorstep!"

"I don't disagree with people living together when they're not married, but marriage is better!"

Marriage for Maurice and Lulu is better because for the first time in their hectic public lives they feel secure; they each know they have the other to come home to. When Lulu is away her brother Billy comes round and keeps Maurice company.

Lulu cannot understand how Maurice can think she looks beautiful first thing in the morning with no make-up. Maurice cannot understand how Lulu can be so hectically organised so early in the morning!

"But we've got to live with each other's faults—and we're going to."

"We've been told the first year of marriage is the worst. If that's so, we just can't wait for next year! I mean, how could we possibly be happier than this?"

They can, and will of course. They're shortly moving into their own house in the country, with a garden. They're already talking about what they want their children to look like, how many they want, and as we watched a tearful Lulu walk down the aisle they looked at each other and said: "What will the children think of this?"

Robin Gibb's back —still digging the Bee Gees

THEY unlocked the door and let Robin Gibb back into the world this week. He is free to follow a solo career; he is free of the Bee Gees although still under contract to the Robert Stigwood Organisation and could, by mutual agreement, work so many months of each year with his brothers (a situation which seems highly improbable, but that's the way the legal eagles wanted it worded.)

For someone who's been in solitary for the past three months, playing the part of the rope in a tug-of-war to manage him, Robin was looking remarkably fit when I met him at his new manager Chris Hutchins' West End offices.

For someone who's alleged to be under the thumb, Robin, with new shorter hairstyle ("I cut my hair to get some air") and splendid hand-made suit, seems much more assured and adult.

For someone who's supposedly said some unprintable things about his brothers and former boss (Hutchins has replaced Stigwood as his personal manager), Robin was bewilderingly benevolent towards the Bee Gees.

The split which started on March 15 and becomes finalised tomorrow (Friday) with the release of his first solo record, "Saved By The Bell," which has a very Bee Gees feel about it, had, in fact, been "brewing for a long time."

Robin said the seeds were planted in his mind last year when Barry Gibb bluntly, and unbeknown to his brothers, announced he intended to go solo himself in two years time. "At the time," added Robin, "I was very Bee Gees-minded and Barry wasn't. It set me thinking. If he could calmly go ahead and leave without regard for the rest of us, then so could I."

"Going solo was something I'd always wanted to do eventually."



ROBIN: it's been tough

by BOB FARMER

You can't stick with the same thing for ever. It was a case of either staying with the Bee Gees until the end or getting out and achieving more on my own."

In the three months that have followed, enough mud has been flung from one side to the other to start an Eton Wall Game and writs passed hands like pieces of confetti. Through it all, Robin stayed silent—officially. And didn't speak to any of his family and former friends. "You can't speak to and be sociable with people who are slapping writs on you. Anyway, my legal advice was to say nothing."

Other people said plenty—the main allegation being that Robin was just a puppet in other people's hands. "Apart from the various offensive remarks that were made publicly, it annoyed me that people thought I couldn't make decisions on my own. Well I can," claims Robin. His wife, Molly, he says, has not been leading him, simply supporting his own decisions.

"It's been very tough," he admits, "because they (his brothers) have been saying what they like and I've had to keep quiet. I feel very much relieved that we have reached a settlement at

long last."

He doesn't agree that his departure has damaged a great group. "The Bee Gees have a fantastic future and I wish them all the best. I think, for a start, their current single is great."

He says his stock answer to the fans who say he should not have left is: "Well, I haven't given up and stopped singing altogether."

Indeed he hasn't. Ahead of him is a world tour, taking in America, the Far East, Germany, and possibly Australia and all their top TV shows. He returns to finish off an album of his own songs ("It's absurd for Barry to say I have done far less writing than him—I've been writing since the group started") and this autumn he undertakes a series of concerts around the country, backed by an orchestra à la Bee Gees.

Says new manager Hutchins: "There hasn't been a major solo teenage attraction since Cliff Richard, and he passed his crest before the Beatles came on the scene."

We'll have to wait and see, but it did seem ironical if not indicative that on the day Robin revealed himself to public scrutiny again, big brother Barry still stole the headlines of every newspaper over that court case...

Benedict